

Dear Mass-ALA Members,

Here is a preview of some of the top five presentations that I am particularly excited about at Mass-ALA's 2019 Conference, [**From Challenge to Opportunity: Igniting Change in Assisted Living**](#). I hope you will join us and not miss these relevant presentations. The topics at this year's conference are based on issues that you told us are areas of critical interest that assisted living professionals need better strategies for. You won't want to miss these workshops, as there is no telling when these topics will be covered again, and the takeaways you can gather from these presentations are in some cases ideas that you will want to bring to your communities right away. Here is a countdown of my top five not-to-be-missed conference presentations:

5. Rising Acuity of Senior Living Residents: How to Mitigate Fall Risk and Medically Complex Residents

As you can see in Mass-ALA Director of Education Laurie Cashman's article in this newsletter, falls prevention was the second-highest rated topic in terms of member interest for education and training, according to recent survey results. In this presentation Lisa MacDonald of FOX Rehab will focus on mitigating fall risk and go beyond that to provide strategies for residents to have "functional wellness" in your communities to address the needs of higher acuity residents.

4. Deeper Dive Into The Missing Link to Move Clients from "Just Satisfied" to "Brand Ambassadors"

The highlight of the Argentum Conference in spring 2019 for me was when a keynote speaker followed up his presentation by leading a breakout session to take a deeper dive on the content of the keynote and allow for questions and discussions of practical application of the key takeaways. I am delighted that we can offer this same format, as Bob Pacanovsky will offer a breakout session after his "Brand Ambassadors" keynote.

3. Dare to Matter: How Senior Living Professionals Rise to Significance

If you're anything like me you might scan conference content to look for information you think you *need* – not information you simply *want*. One problem with this approach is that we don't always know what we need, and sometimes the bottom-line approach of looking for useful information leads us to undervalue fresh approaches to self-care and work-life balance that could provide the most lasting and rewarding lessons. In this presentation, nationally renowned author and speaker Pete Smith will focus on finding meaning and significance in our work in a way that keeps us energized. As our conference brochure overview describes, "Since surviving a stroke, and after years of research, interviews, training's, and observation, Pete Smith reveals the Significance framework outlined in his best-selling book, *Dare to Matter*. This framework reveals the six major pillars of significance and how they can be incorporated into our daily lives. This framework challenges traditional thinking of success and happiness and presents an alternative, possibly contrarian, approach that will leave the attendees feeling inspired, engaged, and committed to making a bigger impact in this world."

2. De-escalating Aggressive Behavior

One of the topics of interest that keeps coming up in our formal committee discussions with members and our informal conversations with assisted living professionals is that of strategies for addressing challenging behaviors. The Mass-ALA Education Committee discussed how in-demand this content was and how the challenge was finding the best speakers to give a practical boots-on-the-ground perspective that would be most helpful. The solution: that those discussing the topic and most interested in sharing strategies could team up to present on de-escalating aggressive behavior at the Conference. Mass-ALA Director of Education Laurie Cashman will bring her years of experience as an ALR executive director and Marilyn Stasonis of Northbridge will bring her experience as a registered nurse with 25 years' experience in assisted living, in varying roles including Resident Care Director, Executive Director and Corporate Director of Wellness and Memory programs. This will be an interactive presentation with some fun role-playing to highlight de-escalation of actual aggressive behavior exhibited in residences.

1. Remarks from Dr. Elizabeth Chen, Secretary of the Massachusetts Executive Office of Elder Affairs

Assisted living residences have been regulated by EOEA for 25 years now. We heard helpful information from Patricia Marchetti and Alexandra Brinkert of EOEA's certification unit at the Regulations Training this spring with respect to surveys, certification, and incident reports. At the Conference we will have the unique opportunity to hear from Dr. Chen, the new Secretary of EOEA. This provides assisted living professionals with the opportunity to hear what is next for EOEA and older adults in Massachusetts from their policy perspective as the thought leaders on healthy aging. We greatly appreciate the opportunity for assisted living professionals to meet Secretary Chen and hear her perspectives and goals for assisted living in Massachusetts.

Don't Miss *From Challenge to Opportunity: Igniting Change in Assisted Living, September 26 at Boston Marriott Newton*. [Register here](#) today and I look forward to seeing you there and hearing your own top five presentations that you are most eager to see!